

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A sales support server which is capable of communicating with an estimated price database, in which specifications for vehicles and estimated prices
5 to be automatically transmitted of the vehicles are stored in association with each other for a plurality of kinds of vehicles, a dealer terminal used by a dealer of vehicles, and a client terminal each other via a network, the sales support server comprising:
 - 10 a reception unit which receives specification information specifying specifications for a vehicle and an estimation request from said client terminal;
 - a reading unit which reads an estimated price to be automatically transmitted from said estimated price
15 database based upon the specification information;
 - a first transmission unit which sends the estimated price to be automatically transmitted read by said reading unit to said client terminal;
 - a second transmission unit which sends the
20 specification information received by said reception unit to said dealer terminal in order to inquire an estimated price from said dealer; and
 - a control unit which, when the estimation request is received by said reception unit, decides whether to
25 send the estimated price to be automatically transmitted stored in said estimated price database to said client terminal or to inquire the estimated price

from said dealer, and controls said first transmission unit or said second transmission unit.

2. The sales support server according to claim 1,
5 further comprising a confirmation unit which confirms with said terminal apparatus whether or not the estimated price to be automatically transmitted read by said reading unit may be presented to a client,
wherein, according to a result of confirmation by
10 said confirmation unit, the estimated price to be automatically transmitted is sent to said client terminal by said first transmission unit.

3. The sales support server according to claim 1,
15 wherein, in response to an estimation request which is received within a predetermined period from update of the estimated price to be automatically transmitted in said estimated price database, said control unit controls said first transmission unit to
20 send the estimated price to be automatically transmitted stored in said estimated price database to said client terminal.

4. The sales support server according to claim 1,
25 wherein said sales support server is capable of communicating with a price information database which stores a market price relating to the vehicle, and

said control unit uses the specification information received by said reception unit to read a related market price from said price information database and read an estimated price to be automatically transmitted from said estimated price database and, in the case in which a difference between the read estimated price to be automatically transmitted and the market price is within a predetermined range, controls said first transmission unit to send the estimated price to be automatically transmitted stored in said estimated price database to said client terminal.

5. The sales support server according to claim 1, wherein said reception unit further receives a desired price at which a client desires to purchase a vehicle from said client terminal, and

in the case in which the estimated price to be automatically transmitted read from said estimated price database is higher than the desired price received by said reception unit, if a difference between the estimated price to be automatically transmitted and the desired price is within a predetermined range, said control unit controls said first transmission unit to send the read estimated price to said client terminal.

6. The sales support server according to claim 1,
wherein said reception unit further receives a
desired price at which a client desires to purchase a
vehicle from said client terminal, and

5 in the case in which the estimated price to be
automatically transmitted read from said estimated
price database is higher than the desired price
received by said reception unit, if a difference
between the estimated price to be automatically
10 transmitted and the desired price is within a
predetermined range, said control unit controls said
first transmission unit to send the received desired
price to said client terminal as an estimated price.

15 7. The sales support server according to claim 1,
wherein said reception unit further receives a
desired price at which a client desires to purchase a
vehicle from said client terminal, and

in the case in which the desired price received by
20 said reception unit is higher than the estimated price
to be automatically transmitted read from said
estimated price database, said control unit controls
said first transmission unit to send the received
desired price to said client terminal as an estimated
25 price.

8. The sales support server according to claim 1,

wherein said estimated price database stores the estimated price to be automatically transmitted for each salesclerk of said dealer,

said reception unit further receives salesclerk
5 information specifying the salesclerk from said client terminal, and

said reading unit reads an estimated price to be automatically transmitted from said estimated price database based upon the salesclerk information and the
10 specification information.

9. The sales support server according to claim 1,
wherein said estimated price database stores an estimated price to be automatically transmitted for all
15 specifications of the vehicle, and

said reading unit reads an estimated price to be automatically transmitted for the same specifications as specification included in the specification information received by said reception unit.
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10. The sales support server according to claim 1,
wherein said estimated price database stores an estimated price to be automatically transmitted for specifications of a part of the vehicle, and

25 in the case in which an estimated price to be automatically transmitted of the specification information received by said reception unit is not

stored in said estimated price database, said reading unit reads an estimated price to be automatically transmitted of specifications close to the specification information.

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11. The sales support server according to claim 1, wherein said estimated price database stores an estimated price to be automatically transmitted for specifications of a part of the vehicle,

10 in the case in which an estimated price to be automatically transmitted of the specification information received by said reception unit is not stored in said estimated price database, said reading unit reads an estimated price to be automatically transmitted of specifications close to the
15 specification information, and

said control unit corrects the read estimated price to be automatically transmitted and sends the estimated price to be automatically transmitted to said
20 client terminal by said first transmission unit as an estimated price to be automatically transmitted corresponding to the specification information received by said reception unit.

25 12. The sales support server according to claim 1, wherein said sales support server is managed by a manufacturer of the vehicle, and

an estimated price to be automatically transmitted included in said estimated price database cannot be updated freely by the manufacturer but can be updated only by access from said dealer terminal.

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13. The sales support server according to claim 1, wherein said reception unit further receives client information specifying a client from said client terminal,

10 said control unit decides whether to send an estimated price to be automatically transmitted stored in said estimated price database to said client terminal or to inquire an estimated price from said dealer according to the client information received by
15 said reception unit, and

 in the case in which said control unit decides that said sales support server should inquire an estimated price from said dealer, said second transmission unit sends the client information and the
20 specification information received by said reception unit to said dealer terminal.

14. The sales support system according to claim 13, wherein said sales support server is capable of
25 communicating with an automatic reply prohibited client database in which clients to whom an estimated price to

be automatically transmitted should not be
automatically sent are registered, and

said control unit refers to said automatic reply
prohibited client database and, if the client
5 information received by said reception unit is included
in said automatic reply prohibited client database,
decides that the sales support server should inquire an
estimated price from said dealer.

10 15. The sales support server according to claim 13,
wherein said sales support server is capable of
communicating with a number of times of estimation
database in which the number of times estimation is
requested is stored for each client, and

15 said control unit refers to said number of times
of estimation database and, in the case in which a
client, who has made the estimation request received by
said reception unit, requested estimation a
predetermined number of times or more in the past,
20 decides that the sales support server should inquire an
estimated price from said dealer.

16. The sales support server according to claim 1,
wherein said reception unit is capable of further
25 receiving a comment made by the client, and

in the case in which said reception unit receives
the comment, said control unit decides that the sales

support server should inquire an estimated price from said dealer.

17. The sales support server according to claim 1,
5 wherein said estimated price database stores specifications of a vehicle for a plurality of types of vehicles, an estimated price to be automatically transmitted in selling the vehicle, and first calculator identification information of a person who
10 has calculated the estimated price to be automatically transmitted associating them with each other,

said reception unit further receives second calculator identification information of a person who should calculate an estimated price from said client
15 terminal,

said control unit decides whether or not said first calculator identification information corresponding to the estimated price to be automatically transmitted of the specification
20 information received by said reception unit and said second calculator identification information received by said reception unit are different, and

in the case in which said control unit decides that the first calculator identification information
25 and the second calculator identification information are different, said second transmission unit sends the estimated price to be automatically transmitted to said

dealer terminal and requests approval on transmitting the estimated price to be automatically transmitted to said client terminal.

- 5 18. A sales support server which is capable of communicating with an estimated price database, in which specifications for vehicles and estimated prices to be automatically transmitted of the vehicles are stored in association with each other for a plurality
- 10 of kinds of vehicles, a dealer terminal used by a dealer of vehicles, and a client terminal each other via a network, the sales support server comprising:
- reception means which receives specification information specifying specifications for a vehicle and
- 15 an estimation request from said client terminal;
- reading means which reads an estimated price to be automatically transmitted from said estimated price database based upon the specification information;
- first transmission means which sends the estimated
- 20 price to be automatically transmitted read by said reading means to said client terminal;
- second transmission means which sends the specification information received by said reception means to said dealer terminal in order to inquire an
- 25 estimated price from said dealer; and
- control means which, when the estimation request is received by said reception means, decides whether to

send the estimated price to be automatically
transmitted stored in said estimated price database to
said client terminal or to inquire the estimated price
from said dealer, and controls said first transmission
5 means or said second transmission means.

19. The sales support server according to claim 18,
wherein said reception means further receives
client information specifying a client from said client
10 terminal,

said control means decides whether to send an
estimated price to be automatically transmitted stored
in said estimated price database to said client
terminal or to inquire an estimated price from said
15 dealer according to the client information received by
said reception means, and

in the case in which said control means decides
that said sales support server should inquire an
estimated price from said dealer, said second
20 transmission means sends the client information and the
specification information received by said reception
means to said dealer terminal.

20. The sales support server according to claim 18,
25 wherein said reception means is capable of further
receiving a comment made by the client, and

in the case in which said reception means receives the comment, said control means decides that the sales support server should inquire an estimated price from said dealer.

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21. The sales support server according to claim 18, wherein said estimated price database stores specifications of a vehicle for a plurality of types of vehicles, an estimated price to be automatically transmitted in selling the vehicle, and first calculator identification information of a person who has calculated the estimated price to be automatically transmitted associating them with each other,

10 said reception means further receives second calculator identification information of a person who should calculate an estimated price from said client terminal,

15 said control means decides whether or not said first calculator identification information corresponding to the estimated price to be automatically transmitted of the specification information received by said reception means and said second calculator identification information received by said reception means are different, and

20 in the case in which said control means decides that the first calculator identification information and the second calculator identification information

are different, said second transmission means sends the estimated price to be automatically transmitted to said dealer terminal and requests approval on transmitting the estimated price to be automatically transmitted to
5 said client terminal.

22. A sales support system, including: a sales support server managed by a manufacturer of vehicles; a dealer terminal used by a dealer of vehicles; a client
10 terminal; and an estimated price database, in which specifications for vehicles and estimated prices to be automatically transmitted for the vehicles are stored in association with each other for a plurality of kinds of vehicles, the sales support server, the dealer
15 terminal, the client terminal, and the estimated price database are capable of communicating with each other via a network,

wherein said sales support server comprises:

a reception unit which receives specification
20 information specifying specifications for a vehicle and an estimation request from said client terminal;

a reading unit which reads an estimated price to be automatically transmitted from said estimated price database based upon the specification information;

25 a first transmission unit which sends the estimated price to be automatically transmitted read by said reading unit to said client terminal;

a second transmission unit which sends the specification information received by said reception unit to said dealer terminal in order to inquire an estimated price from said dealer; and

5 a control unit which, when the estimation request is received by said reception unit, decides whether to send the estimated price to be automatically transmitted stored in said estimated price database to said client terminal or to inquire the estimated price
10 from said dealer, and controls said first transmission unit or said second transmission unit.

23. The sales support system according to claim 22,
wherein said reception unit further receives
15 client information specifying a client from said client terminal,

said control unit decides whether to send an estimated price to be automatically transmitted stored in said estimated price database to said client
20 terminal or to inquire an estimated price from said dealer according to the client information received by said reception unit, and

in the case in which said control unit decides that said sales support server should inquire an
25 estimated price from said dealer, said second transmission unit sends the client information and the

specification information received by said reception unit to said dealer terminal.

24. The sales support system according to claim 22,
5 the sales support server according to claim 1,
wherein said reception unit is capable of further receiving a comment made by the client, and

in the case in which said reception unit receives the comment, said control unit decides that the sales
10 support server should inquire an estimated price from said dealer.

25. The sales support system according to claim 22,
wherein said estimated price database stores
15 specifications of a vehicle for a plurality of types of vehicles, an estimated price to be automatically transmitted in selling the vehicle, and first calculator identification information of a person who has calculated the estimated price to be automatically
20 transmitted associating them with each other,

said reception unit further receives second calculator identification information of a person who should calculate an estimated price from said client terminal,

25 said control unit decides whether or not said first calculator identification information corresponding to the estimated price to be

automatically transmitted of the specification
information received by said reception unit and said
second calculator identification information received
by said reception unit are different, and

5 in the case in which said control unit decides
that the first calculator identification information
and the second calculator identification information
are different, said second transmission unit sends the
estimated price to be automatically transmitted to said
10 dealer terminal and requests approval on transmitting
the estimated price to be automatically transmitted to
said client terminal.

26. A sales support method which uses a sales support
15 server managed by a manufacturer of vehicles, a dealer
terminal used by a dealer of vehicles, a client
terminal, and an estimated price database in which
specifications for vehicles and estimated prices to be
automatically transmitted for the vehicles are stored
20 in association with each other for a plurality of kinds
of vehicles, the sales support method comprising:

a reception step in which said sales support
server receives specification information specifying
specifications for a vehicle and an estimation request
25 from said client terminal;

a decision step of, when the estimation request is
received in the reception step, deciding whether to

send an estimated price to be automatically transmitted stored in said estimated price database to said client terminal or to inquire an estimated price from said dealer;

5 a first transmission step of, if it is decided in said decision step to send the estimated price to be automatically transmitted stored in said estimated price database to said client terminal, reading the estimated price to be automatically transmitted from
10 said estimated price database based upon the specification information received in said reception step and sending the estimated price to said client terminal; and

 a second transmission step of, if it is decided in
15 said decision step to inquire the estimated price from said dealer, sending the specification information received in said reception step to said dealer terminal.

27. The sales support method according to claim 26,
20 wherein, in said reception step, client information specifying a client is received from said client terminal,

 in said decision step, it is decided whether to send an estimated price to be automatically transmitted
25 stored in said estimated price database to said client terminal or to inquire an estimated price from said

dealer according to the client information received in said reception step, and

in said second transmission step, in the case in which it is decided in said decision step said sales support server should inquire an estimated price from said dealer, the client information and the specification information received in said reception step to said dealer terminal.

28. The sales support method according to claim 26, wherein, in said reception step, a comment made by the client can be further received from said client terminal, and

in said decision step, in the case in which the comment is received in said reception step, it is decided that said sales support server should inquire an estimated price from said dealer.

29. The sales support method according to claim 26, wherein said estimated price database stores specifications of a vehicle for a plurality of types of vehicles, an estimated price to be automatically transmitted in selling the vehicle, and first calculator identification information of a person who has calculated the estimated price to be automatically transmitted associating them with each other,

in said reception step, second calculator identification information of a person who should calculate an estimated price is further received from said client terminal,

5 in said decision step, it is decided whether or not said first calculator identification information corresponding to the estimated price to be automatically transmitted of the specification information received in said reception step and said
10 second calculator identification information received in said reception step are different, and

in said second transmission step, in the case in which it is decided in said decision step that the first calculator identification information and the
15 second calculator identification information are different, the estimated price to be automatically transmitted is sent to said dealer terminal and approval on transmitting the estimated price to be automatically transmitted to said client terminal is
20 requested.